

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION
Serial No. 09/925,850
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REMARKS

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated December 15, 2003. In view of the amendments and the following discussion, the Applicants believe that all claims are in allowable form.

CLAIM 20

Claim 20 has been amended to correct punctuation.

CLAIM OBJECTION

Claim 4 stand objected. In response, the Applicants have replaced the term SAR with "SAF" as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the objection to this claim be withdrawn.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

A. §102(e) Claims 1-4 and 20

Claims 1-4, and 20 stand rejected as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,483,675 B1 issued November 19, 2002 to *Araki, et al.*, (hereinafter referred to as "*Araki*"). The Applicants respectfully disagree.

The Applicants submit that they conceived of the claimed invention on or before March 30, 2000, the earliest effective filing date of *Araki*. In support of this submission, the Applicants enclose a declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 that has been executed by the inventors, Sining Mao, Janusz J. Nowak, Eric S. Linville and Jian Chen, that declares a conception date for the invention claimed in the above-identified patent application to be on or before March 30, 2000. In view of this declaration, the Applicants respectfully submit that *Araki* is not prior art with respect to the present Application and should be withdrawn as a reference.

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Thus, the Applicants submit that claims 1-4 and 20 are patentable over *Araki*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection to these claims be withdrawn.

B. §103(a) Claims 1-14 and 17-20

Claims 1-14, and 17-20 stand rejected as being unpatentable over *Araki* in view of United States Patent No. 6,483,675 issued March 25, 2000 to *Gill* (hereinafter referred to as "*Gill*"). The Applicants respectfully disagree.

As discussed above, *Araki* is not prior art with respect to this Application. Moreover, the Applicants submit that they conceived of the claimed invention on or before July 31, 2000, the earliest effective filing date of *Gill*. In view of the declaration discussed above, the Applicants respectfully submit that *Gill* is not prior art with respect to the present Application and should be withdrawn as a reference.

Thus, the Applicants submit that claims 1-14, and 17-20 are patentable over *Gill* in view of *Araki*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection to these claims be withdrawn.

NEW CLAIMS

The Applicants have been added new claims 21-22. The Applicants submit that new claims 21-22 are fully supported by the specification and that no new matter has been entered. Specifically, new claims 21-22 depend indirectly from claim 1 and recite limitations similar to those of claims 3. The Applicants submit that new claims 21-22 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependancy from claim 1, the patentability of which has been discussed above. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 21-22.

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CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicants submit that all claims now pending are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issuance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that any unresolved issues still exist, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Keith Taboada at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Mar 30, 2004

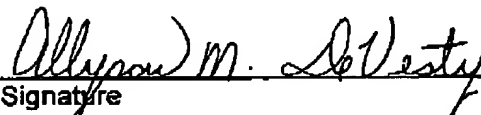


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted by facsimile under 37 C.F.R. §1.8 on March 30, 2004 and is addressed to Mail Stop Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Arlington, VA 22313, Facsimile No: (703) 872-9306.



Signature
Allyson M. DeVesty

Printed Name of Person Signing
3-30-04

Date of signature